

CAMBRIA STEEL COMPANY,
COMPRESSOR ENGINE HOUSE
(Bethlehem Steel Company, Tin Shop)
Cambria Iron Works
Lower Works
Johnstown
Cambria County
Pennsylvania

HAER No. PA-312-B

HAER
PA
11-JOTO,
137B-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
P.O. Box 37127
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
CAMBRIA STEEL COMPANY, COMPRESSOR ENGINE HOUSE
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Location: Lower Works, Johnstown, Cambria
County, Pennsylvania

Quad: Johnstown, Pennsylvania

UTM: E.676380 N.4467200

Date of Construction: ca. 1900

Fabricator: unknown

Present Owner: Bethlehem Steel Corporation

Present Use: abandoned

Significance: Housed compressor engines that
supplied shops of Lower Works.
Became tin shop in 1930s until
recently abandoned.

Historian: Gray Fitzsimons

Project Information:

The results of the study of Cambria County were published in 1990: Fitzsimons, Gray, editor, Blair County and Cambria County, Pennsylvania: An Inventory of Historic Engineering and Industrial Sites (Washington, D.C.: America's Industrial Heritage Project (AIHP) and HABS/HAER, National Park Service). The contents of the publication were transmitted to the Library of Congress as individual reports. Research notes, field photos and copies of historic photos collected during the project were transmitted to the AIHP Collection, Special Collections, Stapleton Library, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana, PA 15705.

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HISTORY

One-and-one-half-story building, of steel and brick construction, gable roof with metal vents along the gable ridge, and several original double-hung, multi-light, wood, sash windows are extant; the brick walls rest on a stone foundation. Measuring 182' x 44', this building was converted into a sheet metal shop in the 1930s; none of the air compressor engines remain.

About 1900 the Cambria Steel Company erected this steel-frame and brick building to house air compressor engines, the compressed air being used throughout the shops of the Lower Works. The building was located next to the Engine House for Blast Furnace Nos. 1-4, and probably used steam from the adjacent boiler house to drive the compressor engines. In the mid-1920s, Bethlehem Steel closed down the four blast furnaces and associated Blowing Engine and Boiler Houses. It is likely that during this same time the compressor engines ceased operation. By the mid-1930s, the Compressor Engine House was used as a tin shop, a function it served until recently when all sheet metal work was moved to the nearby Pattern Shop.

SOURCES

Galasso, Ralph, Pattern-Maker, Bethlehem Steel Corporation,
Johnstown Plant, Lower Works Division, Interviewed February
1987.

"Key Plan, Johnstown Plants: February 16, 1923; revised January
26, 1927, March 29, 1930, and February 13, 1939," (copy
available at the Canal Museum, Center for Canal History and
Technology, Easton, Pennsylvania

Sanborn Map Company, Johnstown, Pennsylvania, New York:
Sanborn Map Co., 1891 and 1911.